

CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS
COLD SPRING HARBOR, LONG ISLAND, N. Y.

February 29, 1955

VIA AIR MAIL

Dear Joshua,

I am sorry to have delayed this long in writing to you about my plans for next year. The manuscript you were promised has not gone astray in the mail but was advertised prematurely. Norton and I still have some critical experiments to run which require a powerful X-ray machine. We are ~~still~~ trying to arrange for the use of a satisfactory machine and when these final experiments are completed, if all goes well, we should have a manuscript ready to distribute. We will send a copy on to you just as soon as possible.

I have not written until now because I did not have a clear idea of what to do after leaving CSH. As you know all of my work has centered on phage and closely-related problems. I am anxious to get a first hand look at some other systems, their techniques and ideas, although I will probably continue working with phage for some time yet. Of course your laboratory would be well suited for this purpose. But I don't think it would be wise to spend another year on a temporary fellowship just now - after 2 1/2 years of living off the Polio Foundation. I prefer to go someplace where I can count on staying for at least a few years with a place of my own to work in. So I have decided not to try to come to Madison.

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I hope I will have the chance to talk with you soon. I may be visiting at Urbana next month and if possible will detour via Madison. But at any rate you are coming to N.Y. for a conference (in May?) and we should be able to meet there.

Many thanks for your Hfr strain which arrived in good order and is functioning admirably. I understand from Larry Morse that you were puzzled about what Dave and I hoped to accomplish with it. The plan is simple but full of technical pitfalls. We want to determine how much DNA, on the average, is transferred from Hfr to F⁻ during a recombination act. Dave has come up with a potentially sensitive technique for this determination — to mix ³²P-labeled phage-resistant Hfr with unlabeled phage-sensitive F⁻, and after recombination has been effected to grow phage in the F⁻ cells and ³²P-labeled ³²P-free from the Hfr ~~and measure~~ its ³²P content. Phage should selectively utilize almost all the DNA of its host. But as you can see we have many preliminary tests to run before we know if the method is practicable.

With best regards,

Alan Garen